

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 430 213

CS 013 550

TITLE Frontiers in Family Learning. A Showcase of Exemplary Family Literacy Programs.
 INSTITUTION National Center for Family Literacy, Louisville, KY.
 SPONS AGENCY Department of Education, Washington, DC.
 ISBN ISBN-1-884458-00-9
 PUB DATE 1996-00-00
 NOTE 95p.
 PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)
 EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
 DESCRIPTORS *Community Involvement; *Demonstration Programs; Educational Innovation; *Family Literacy; *Intergenerational Programs; Models; Preschool Education; Student Educational Objectives
 IDENTIFIERS Even Start; National Center for Family Literacy; National Diffusion Network

ABSTRACT

This report showcases four programs nationally recognized as leaders in family literacy--each of these programs has participated in a validation process sponsored by the National Diffusion Network (NDN), an agency of the United States Department of Education that disseminates information and training about exemplary educational programs and practices. All four of the programs receive federal Even Start funding; the recognized programs are: Literacy Volunteers of America--Chippewa Valley, Eau Claire, Wisconsin; Even Start Project, Manhattan/Ogden, Junction City/Fort Riley, Kansas; Webster Groves Even Start, Rock Hill, Missouri; and Family Intergenerational Literacy Model (FILM), Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The report also notes that these successful programs illustrate the variety of ways public funding, augmented by community collaboration, can provide the essential components of family literacy and meet the specific needs of an undereducated population. The report is divided into the following sections: Introduction to Family Literacy; Two Routes to Program Validation; Program Profiles; The Essential Components of Family Literacy; Community Involvement: Meeting the Needs; Special Features of the Programs; and Resources for Family Literacy. (NKA)

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Frontiers in Family Learning

ED 430 213

A Showcase of Exemplary Family Literacy Programs

Produced
by the
National Center
for Family Literacy

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National Center
for Family Literacy
1996



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MO photos on pp. 30, 33, & 41

Other MO photos courtesy of Webster Groves School District

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Program photographs are identified by state initials in lower left corner.

Cover photograph is by David Joles.

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Printed in the United States of America

ISBN # 1-884458-00-9

Printed by Documation LLC, Eau Claire, WI

Foreword

Dear friends of family literacy:

I am pleased to introduce this showcase of excellent family literacy programs. We at the National Center for Family Literacy are honored to have been a part of the national dissemination system for family literacy, charged with the task of identifying quality programs and practices. We have learned so much from teachers, administrators, and families in programs like those featured here — lessons that have enhanced our training and strengthened the message we bring to the nation. In this publication we share some of these lessons with you by providing an inside look at how exemplary programs put the principles of effective programming into action.

The programs highlighted in this showcase have gone through a rigorous external validation process. Therefore, we know they are performing at a basic level and beyond: providing high-quality integrated service in all component areas, achieving important outcomes for families, and offering unique features and services to the field.

We are proud to introduce these four exemplary programs. We hope their stories will help you and the families you serve to create success stories of your own.

Sincerely,

Sharon Darling

Sharon Darling
President of NCFL





Frontiers in Family Learning . . .

Frontiers are new areas of knowledge

Family literacy represents a new frontier in education: a comprehensive approach that deals with the family as a learning unit.

This showcase features four programs nationally recognized as leaders in family literacy. Each of these programs has participated in a validation process sponsored by the National Diffusion Network (NDN), an agency of the U.S. Department of Education that disseminates information and training about exemplary educational programs and practices. Two routes to validation were available: 1) the Program Effectiveness Panel (PEP) through the U.S. Department of Education, or 2) the National Family Literacy Project (NFLP) through the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL). All four programs receive federal Even Start funding.

The purpose of this publication is to provide an overview of the Even Start family literacy programs in the following communities:

Eau Claire, Wisconsin
Manhattan/Ogden, Kansas
Webster Groves School District, Missouri
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

These successful programs illustrate the variety of ways public funding, augmented by community collaboration, can provide the essential components of family literacy and meet the specific needs of an undereducated population.

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This publication demonstrates

- how successful programs help families develop strategies for lifelong learning, employability, and positive parenting.
- how these programs integrate the essential components to provide a family-focused service approach.
- how communities collaborate to provide the services that enable parents to participate:

transportation	child care
recruitment	retention
counseling	facilities
technology	books and materials
financing	ESL classes
transition to the next level	

Introduction to Family Literacy

The four exemplary family literacy programs described in this publication use different methods to strengthen and empower families. However, they all provide the services listed below.

The Essential Components of Family Literacy:

- **Adult literacy, basic skills, and life skills instruction**
Raising the education level of parents helps them gain the motivation, skills, and knowledge needed to become employed or to pursue further education or training.
- **Early childhood education**
Increasing the developmental skills of preschool children better prepares them for academic and social success in school.
- **Parent education and support**
Providing parents with an opportunity to share their concerns with a trained instructor and/or their peers helps them learn new parenting strategies and provides support in their efforts to deal more effectively with day-to-day challenges.
- **Regular opportunities for parent and child interaction**
Providing role models and structured situations for positive parent-child interaction empowers parents in their roles as the primary teachers of their own children. This also strengthens the learning relationship between parent and child and helps parents feel more comfortable in school settings.
- **Component Integration**
Fostering teamwork and open communication allows the separate components to form a comprehensive, family-focused service approach to intergenerational education.

Component Integration

Family literacy is a complex arrangement. To be effective within the whole family, the four essential components must be connected in meaningful ways. This holistic approach integrates the experiences and values needed to change the intergenerational patterns associated with low literacy.

Integration ensures that the following messages, common to all components, will be continuously reinforced:

- Literacy has value and relevance.
- Families are capable of meeting high expectations.
- The parent plays a central role in child development.
- Individual strengths and family strengths are building blocks for families.
- The goals and interests identified by families will determine their direction.
- The application and transfer of skills are essential.
- Practice is important.

Full integration of the four essential components requires teamwork and the support of program leadership. Staff members meet regularly to maintain open communication about the families and to plan activities that strengthen all areas.



MO

Two Routes to Program Validation

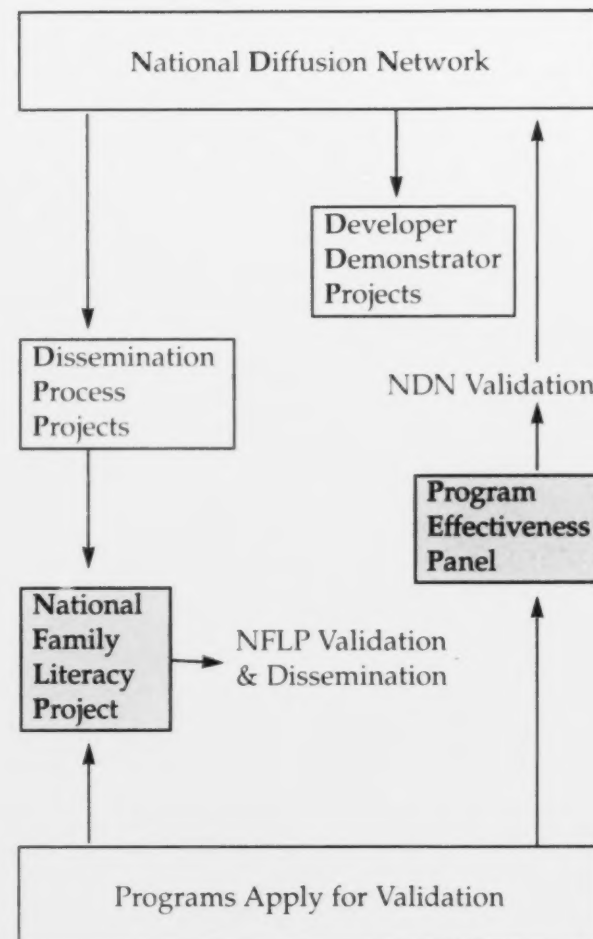
The **National Diffusion Network (NDN)** validates educational models proven effective in achieving the National Goals for Education. Administered by the U.S. Department of Education, NDN provides funds to implement exemplary programs in schools, colleges, and other institutions across the country. NDN programs have undergone rigorous evaluation. Together they form a resource network to help others improve their own education systems. Family literacy programs are offered two alternative routes for validation.

The Program Effectiveness Panel

The Program Effectiveness Panel (PEP) serves as the U.S. Department of Education's primary means of certifying the effectiveness of educational programs. Programs are validated on the basis of **outcomes** which the National Diffusion Network (NDN) specifies and supports as important. Claims of effectiveness must be substantiated.

PEP validation of Even Start submittals requires the following:

- Superior effectiveness for children based on school readiness or early school achievement
- Progress in improving adult literacy and/or GED attainment
- Improved parenting skills, attitudes, and knowledge
- Outcome measures valid for the majority of children served
- Evaluation results favorable, complete, and multi-year





NCFL President Sharon Darling (left) presents a validation award to one of the first programs to be recognized, Literacy Volunteers of America-Chippewa Valley of Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

The National Family Literacy Project

The National Family Literacy Project (NFLP) was funded by the National Diffusion Network from 1993-1995 as a service of the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL). The NFLP was designated a Dissemination Process Project (see chart on facing page), providing an additional mechanism for identifying and disseminating innovative family literacy programs and practices. Family literacy programs with something special to share with the field were accorded public recognition through the NFLP.

NFLP validation of programs required the following:

- Inclusion of the four essential components
- At least one year of operation
- An evaluation plan designed to assess program effectiveness in achieving its goals in the area of participant outcomes
- A feature or process of special interest to others in the field

A note to programs interested in applying for validation:

The validation process is undergoing change due to reduced federal funding. For information on program validation, contact the National Center for Family Literacy or the National Diffusion Network. (See page 46.)

Program Evaluation

The exemplary programs selected through the filtering systems of the National Diffusion Network serve as models for other programs throughout the nation, enabling new programs to profit from the experience of others and offering enough variety for program planners to choose a model that best suits their needs. These programs were able to demonstrate their effectiveness because they had strong evaluation systems.

Even programs that are not seeking national recognition need to evaluate their services and be prepared to substantiate their claims of effectiveness. The following guidelines offered by the National Center for Family Literacy help programs prepare an evaluation plan that documents outcomes for participating families.

1. Review program goals and identify your impact objectives (outcomes).
What are you aiming for (specifically) in the way of change in participating families?
2. Analyze your curricula and program activities.
Are they directly related to the outcomes you expect for parents and children?
3. Identify appropriate measure of those outcomes.
These include tests and informal assessments like observations and interviews.
Do your assessments measure what they are supposed to measure?
Do they cover the range of your program goals?
4. Choose an evaluation design.
You will want to work with an evaluator at this point, if not before.
5. Develop a plan for administering assessments and collecting data on participants.
6. Collect and analyze the data.
7. Summarize your conclusions and prepare to explain their significance.

Programs also conduct ongoing evaluation to fine-tune their services. One way to examine program processes is to consult recognized program standards. The following instruments are useful evaluation tools for program staff: 1) *Family Literacy Program Quality Self-Study*, available through NCFL, and 2) *Guide to Quality Indicators for Even Start Programs*, available through Even Start. These instruments suggest program principles and quality indicators—documents, materials, behaviors, etc.—that might be observed in excellent programs. For information about these agencies, see page 46.

Program Profiles



These nationally recognized programs share many outstanding qualities. All offer some form of the essential components. All effectively integrate these components to provide comprehensive services. All utilize existing resources within their communities to supplement federal funding and meet the needs of the program. All build on family strengths, using the interests and goals of families as guides for programming. All are continuously evolving, learning from experience and adapting to changing conditions.

Differences emerge as programs assess the population to be served. For example, the growth of a population for whom English is a second language necessitates greater emphasis on ESL offerings. Changing resources will also contribute to the evolution of a family literacy program. One thing that does **not** change is the necessity of assessment and evaluation to determine whether a program is accomplishing its goals. Evaluation must be complete and ongoing.

LVA—Chippewa Valley Family Literacy Program

Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Validated by NFLP, September 1994

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Administrative agency: | Literacy Volunteers of America-Chippewa Valley
400 Eau Claire Street
Eau Claire, WI 54701
Contact: Carol Gabler, Executive Director (715) 834-0222 |
| Population served: | 75 families; primarily white and Southeast Asian |
| Community partners: | Chippewa Valley Technical College, Eau Claire public schools, L. E. Phillips Memorial Public Library, Eau Claire County Human Services (JOBS), YMCA |
| Instructional services: | Families are served through a collaboration of agencies at multiple sites. Adult Basic Education is provided by certified instructors. The preschool program works closely with public school Chapter 1, Head Start and Exceptional Needs programs. The parenting/employability component is integrated into adult basic education, with a work-experience component. Parent-child interaction is integrated throughout all components on a regular basis. |
| Unique features: | Governance by a volunteer literacy program with an advisory committee of community partners
Volunteers used in all components of the program, including tutors for adult one-to-one instruction
A publishing company established to disseminate information |
| Additional services: | Sibling child care
Bus transportation provided by public schools
Social worker on staff |

Even Start Project

Manhattan/Ogden, Junction City/Fort Riley, Kansas

Validated by NFLP, September 1994

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| — | Administrative agency: | Even Start USD 383 Manhattan/Ogden, KS
Ogden, KS
Director: Barbara Tierney
For more information, contact: National Center for Family Literacy
(502) 584-1133 |
| — | Population served: | 200 families in an area that covers two counties and includes two small cities, a major army base, and a small town |
| — | Community partners: | Manhattan/Ogden-USD 383, Junction City/Fort Riley-USD 475 schools and community agencies including Kansas State University, Adult Basic Education, Manhattan Area Technical Center, Flint Hills Job Corps, and Head Start |
| — | Instructional services: | Families are served through a combination of center-based workshops, home services, parent resource rooms, parent involvement programs, transitional pre-kindergartens, and summer enrichment programs. Additional classes in adult basic education, parenting education, and early childhood education are available through collaborating agencies. |
| — | Unique features: | Integrated curriculum based on children's literature
Extensive community outreach and collaboration |
| — | Additional services: | Child care
Transportation
Referral to appropriate collaborating agencies
Free books and developmental literacy activities given to families |

Webster Groves Even Start

Rock Hill, Missouri

Validated by PEP, June 1994

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Administrative agency: | Webster Groves School District
9153 (R) Manchester
Rock Hill, MO 63119
Contact: Diane Givens, Coordinator (314) 968-5354 |
| Population served: | 100 families per year; primarily low income, urban, minority |
| Community partners: | Webster University, Literacy Council, J.T.P.A., Head Start, Webster-Rock Hill Ministries, Edgewood Children's Center, St. Louis Community College, YMCA, Family Support Network, Parents As Teachers, local hospitals, service agencies, and businesses |
| Instructional services: | Families receive integrated educational opportunities through a Family Learning Center, home-based activities, and collaborative services of community agencies. |
| Unique features: | Extensive involvement of parents: typing newsletters, assisting with fund-raising efforts, monitoring the lunch program, working in the lending library, and planning family events and field trips
Incentive programs for participant retention |
| Additional services: | Child care provided through Early Childhood Center
Transportation to the Center
Breakfast and lunch provided through free/reduced-price meal program
Tutoring available through a local university, the Literacy Council and the community
Team home visits
Abuse/neglect preventive services and other counseling |

Family Intergenerational Literacy Model (FILM)

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Validated by PEP, April 1994

- Administrative agency:** Oklahoma City Public Schools/Even Start
Capitol Hill Elementary
2717 South Robinson
Oklahoma City, OK 73109
Contact: Mary Brown, Even Start Program Director (405) 235-0801
- Population served:** 45-50 families at any given time; culturally diverse population
- Community partners:** Oklahoma City Public Schools, Oklahoma City University, Southwestern Bell
Pioneers
- Instructional services:** Families are served through a center and home-based program which integrates five instructional parts: Adult Interaction Education, Parent Discussion Group, Early Learning Center, Parent-Child Interaction Playgroup, and Home Visit Interaction.
- Unique features:** Instructional design, MODELS, developed by Donna Richardson, applied in all components: Model, Observation, Discussion, Exploration, Life skill integration, Success celebration
Individual literacy tutors provided in ESL and GED preparation classes
Parents involved as "training aides" in Early Learning Center
- Additional services:** Child care through on-site Early Learning Center
Daily transportation through local school district
Referral to community and city agencies for a variety of needed services
Family-style breakfast for staff and families, lunch served to children

The Essential Components: Adult Education

Adult literacy instruction must be relevant to the needs of adult learners in order to be effective. Consequently it must go beyond teaching reading to include skills in writing and computation, critical thinking (problem solving), speaking and listening, and using computers. Parents in family literacy set their own goals. Some prepare to pass their high school equivalency exams. Some learn new skills or improve existing ones in order to enter other training institutions or the workplace. Adult education may be provided by a collaborating agency at the same site as early childhood education, or it may be provided at a separate site. It may also be included in a home-visit curriculum.

The Family Learning Center of the Webster Groves School District (MO) offers all four components at a single site. For flexibility, adult education classes are conducted in the evenings as well as during the day. The educational offerings include cooperative learning activities, peer teaching, one-to-one with tutors, and individualized studying. All instruction is relevant to life experience, including computer skills, math for everyday living, and other pre-employability skills.

The Kansas Even Start Project meets the needs of adult basic education through a combination of a home-based curriculum, center-based workshops, and referrals to programs provided by collaborating agencies. Computer training, for example, is provided by the local technical center.

The Family Literacy Program of LVA-CV in Eau Claire, WI, offers adult education at two sites. One classroom is located in donated space next to the YMCA, which houses both the preschool and child-care service for siblings. A few miles away, in classrooms donated by the public school district, parents and preschoolers are able to attend classes in the same building. A strong partnership with the local technical college ensures the services of certified ABE instructors to support the primarily volunteer program. Tutors are provided and trained by the literacy program.





The **FILM program in Oklahoma City, OK**, views the adult education curriculum as an evolving plan for learning, based on meaningful life experiences for adult students. The focus in this whole language approach is relevant and useful training. In learning about computers, for example, parents might be given the task of creating a cookbook. This exercise yields a useful product while strengthening basic language skills and developing the essential computer skills.

The holistic approach to adult learning in the **Oklahoma City, OK, family project** includes a variety of learning centers, such as a reading, writing, and listening center, a computer center, a job/career center, a science center, and a math center. Students are encouraged to help plan, set-up, and maintain these centers.

"Even Start has gotten me back into the habit of getting up, being ready on time, calling in if I am not going to be here. All of the things I had forgotten . . . Now when one of my family members has a question about math or reading, they ask me. When we are shopping and there is 40, 60, or 75 percent off they ask me to figure it out. That tells me they are proud of me, that makes me feel good."

Webster Groves Even Start (MO) participant



Early Childhood Education

The goal of early childhood education in family literacy programs is to provide developmental experiences conducive to continuing success in education. This component stresses pre-literacy skills (such as vocabulary building) as well as organizational and social skills, all factors in preparing children to do well in school.

The means of delivery of early childhood education will vary according to the availability of sites and services. Shared facilities are the ideal, because of convenience; however, other arrangements can be equally successful. A key element is the ease with which parents can be brought to the preschool setting for guided interaction with their children.

The **Early Learning Center** in **Oklahoma City, OK**, shares facilities with the adult program. Children are grouped in 'classes' according to age: infants, toddlers, and pre-kindergarten. Sessions are offered twelve hours each week. The Center encourages reading and writing in young children by sustaining and promoting native language fluency, as well as enhancing second language acquisition. The children learn through full integration of oral communication, children's literature, writing, and bilingual resources—in an environment that celebrates cultural and linguistic diversity.

Webster Groves Even Start (MO) provides four hours per day of early childhood educational activities designed to develop pre-literacy skills. The areas covered include social interaction, language development, math readiness, science, and computer skills. The children share learning experiences with their parents 30 minutes per day in Parent and Child Together (PACT) time.





Early childhood education offered in the **Manhattan/Ogden, KS, Even Start Project** is primarily home-based. The instructional units used throughout the project focus on children's literature as the vehicle for delivery. Many of the participating children also receive center-based instruction through Head Start and cooperative efforts with the public schools. A transitional pre-kindergarten program is offered by Even Start in the summer. Parents attend the transitional classes with their children.

The *High Scope* approach (High Scope Educational Research Foundation: see page 46) is the basis of early childhood curriculum in the programs operated by the **Webster Groves School District (MO)**, the **LVA-CV Family Literacy Program** in Eau Claire, WI, and the **FILM Project** in Oklahoma City, OK. This approach promotes active learning and encourages children to develop and use problem-solving skills. **Webster Groves Even Start** also applies the principles of *Project Construct*, a theory that children learn most readily when they are actively involved in meaningful experiences (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1991).

Preschool classes in the **Family Literacy Program** in Eau Claire, WI, are offered at two different sites. One is housed in the YMCA and the other in a public school early learning center. Children at both sites benefit from the recreational facilities at the YMCA and the diagnostic services of early childhood learning specialists available through the school district.



WI

Parent Education and Support

The goal of parent education in most family literacy programs is to help adults function more effectively as parents and providers. Each of the featured family literacy programs offers some form of the following related activities:

1. Group-based parent activities

Parenting instruction with the peer group provides a comfortable environment where parents can learn about child growth and development. As a group they can also share concerns about discipline, self-esteem, career options, problems with social services, or other issues. Often guest speakers are brought in to share insights and expertise.

2. Home visits by the instructor

The home visitor is a powerful role model who provides support and information in the home setting. Home visits provide an opportunity to address the parents' personal concerns and refer them to community agencies when needed. Planned interaction activities allow the parent to apply the positive child-guidance techniques discussed in parenting classes. The parent is encouraged to take on the role of the child's primary teacher in a home environment supportive of learning.

3. Supervised parent-child interaction

Active participation with their children in the presence of the instructor gives the parents an opportunity to observe role models and demonstrate their own growth in parenting strategies.

The **Oklahoma City, OK, family project** considers it unrealistic to expect parents to learn all they need to know about parenting in an hour or so of parent discussion time each week or during home visits, even if they occur weekly. Consequently, effort is made to consistently integrate parenting issues into the adult education component. The recognition of students as parents, as learners, and as teachers of their own children leads to a natural avenue for exploring problem-solving, critical thinking, and communication skills. This fosters a holistic approach where self-esteem is viewed as a process, not as an end-product.



Group parenting instruction in the **Manhattan/Ogden, KS, program** is achieved through community collaboration. Membership in the local Coalition of Parent Educators (which includes about 30 agencies) connects the program with a vast network of services for parents. Monthly newsletters supply information about available services, special events, and program schedules. Home visitors deal with individual concerns on a one-to-one basis as they guide parents through literature-based parenting materials.

In addition to offering weekly classes to instruct parents on parenting, life skills, and pre-employability, the **Family Learning Center** operated by the **Webster Groves School District (MO)** provides opportunities for parents to become involved in the Center's special activities. Parents are encouraged to volunteer in the book-lending library, type the newsletter, monitor the lunch program, and help coordinate field trips and fund-raising events. This participation allows them to acquire useful skills, provide an essential service, and experience the self-satisfaction which accompanies involvement in a worthwhile effort. They can also include these experiences in their resumes.

"One time, during a home visit, I noticed a hand-out from a parenting session taped to the refrigerator door. It was a list of ten things to do before you hit your child. When the mother saw me looking at it, she told me that she had not hit her preschooler since that list went up."

WI Even Start parenting instructor



Parental needs and interests help guide curriculum choice in the **Eau Claire, WI, family literacy program**. Preparation for employment shares high priority with parenting instruction. To accommodate the current trend to accelerate the transition of welfare recipients into jobs more rapidly, the adult program is structured to allow work experience, two days per week, through an arrangement with participating businesses. The children are in the family literacy program while parents work, so child care is not a problem.

Parent-Child Interaction

Scheduled interaction time allows parents and children to come together to play and learn. Staff members function as role models to demonstrate to the parents that they can guide and teach their own children—and to convince them that they are, indeed, their children's first and most important teachers.

The **Oklahoma City, OK, Parent-Child Interaction Playgroup** meets one hour a week. The teacher models appropriate interactions and demonstrates parenting skills. The interactive setting stimulates cooperative problem-solving strategies as peers learn from one another as well as from the parenting facilitator. This creates a sense of extended family. Parents are encouraged to get involved in classroom activities, such as doing art projects and reading books with the children, and by bringing materials from home that support the curriculum theme.

The **Manhattan/Ogden, KS, Even Start project** provides interaction opportunities through home visits, family field trips, and events sponsored by collaborating agencies. During the regularly-scheduled home visits, the trained paraprofessionals conduct sessions for parents and children centered around children's literature. Summer interaction activities offer field trips for the whole family, with a wide range of possibilities, including the grocery store, a children's museum, a fishing excursion/picnic, the zoo, and the state university dairy barns. Parents are kept aware of special family events in the community through the monthly newsletter.



Parents in all programs are encouraged to read books to their children, often, and to talk about the books with the children.

Parents in the **Eau Claire, WI, Family Literacy Program** have several different interaction opportunities. In addition to participating in regularly scheduled events in the children's classroom, referred to as Parent and Child Together time (PACT time), all parents are required to assist in the children's classroom at least once every month. This gives them the experience of working with children other than their own. They can also check out take-home kits, which contain all the materials needed to share a pleasurable learning activity with their children.

A committee of volunteers in the **Eau Claire, WI, literacy program** conducts Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) events for the parents and children enrolled in family literacy. Held at the library, these events focus on interesting themes and feature live animals, visiting storytellers, vigorous games and dances, snacks, and free books.



Webster Groves Even Start (MO) offers Parent and Child Together time (PACT time) for 30-45 minutes every day. PACT time includes such activities as reading, drawing, puppet shows, story-telling, arts and crafts, doing puzzles, and making toys out of household items. All activities can be duplicated and enjoyed by families at home. For fifteen minutes each day parents and children also engage in Drop Everything And Read time (DEAR).

All of the validated programs offer occasional field trips for families. Parents in the **Webster Groves Even Start (MO)** assist with the planning of monthly field trips.

Component Integration

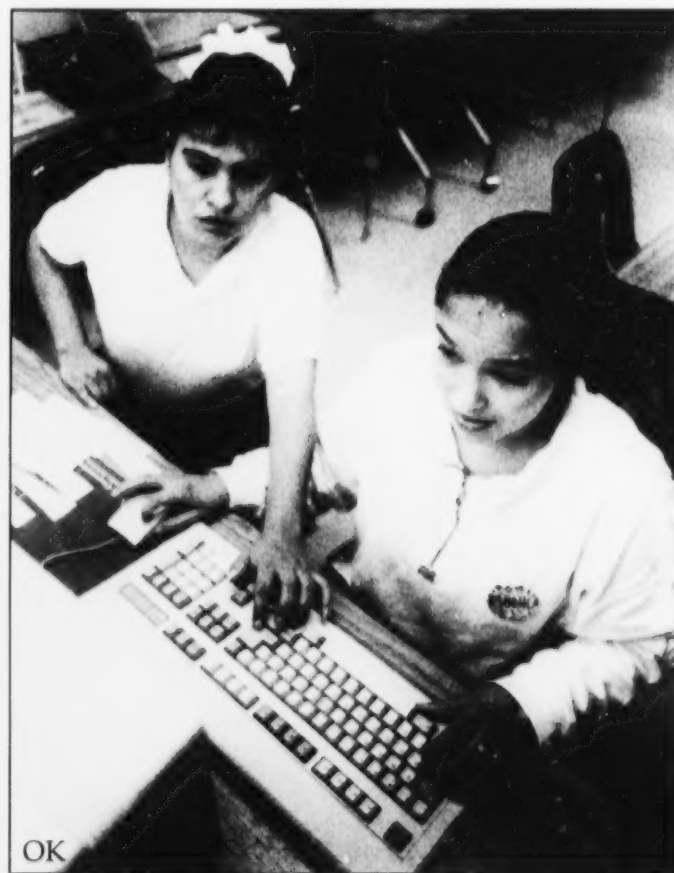
The key factor in effective component integration is teamwork. Staff members in all aspects of the program communicate to stay informed, provide support for each others' efforts, and maintain focus on the family as a whole.

Examples of integration:

- Activities and plans are based on goals and interests identified by families rather than relying on preset materials.
- Parents are involved in the children's classroom.
- Home visits provide an opportunity to practice skills learned in parenting instruction.
- Parenting time addresses issues that arise during home visits and parent-child activities.
- Home visits and parenting activities have literacy connections.
- School activities transfer to work and to home.
- Adult literacy skills are taught in the context of early childhood development, parenting, use of community resources, and employment.

Facilitating integration:

- Staff planning time is paid time within the work day.
- Staff development includes specific training in family literacy.



OK

Children's literature is the integrating factor in the **Manhattan/Ogden, KS, Even Staff** program. The curriculum features carefully chosen books, which support themes related to holistic needs: parenting strategies, literacy habits in the home, language development, stress management, and so forth. These themes are presented in home visits and reinforced in other areas, such as Parent Reading Workshops.

One integrating factor in the **Eau Claire, WI, program** is the Family Literacy Advisory Committee. Representation by all partners fosters regular communication and a team approach to problem solving. Staff members also meet together regularly to plan interaction activities and discuss ways to meet the needs of individual families.

The **Eau Claire, WI**, parent education curriculum helps parents transfer skills from one component to another, such as applying newly-acquired parenting strategies in the home setting and taking improved interpersonal relationship skills from peer group settings to home and the workplace.

Component integration in the **Webster Groves Even Start (MO)** is facilitated by the ongoing personal and professional development opportunities provided for all staff. This focus on growth helps staff in all areas identify the strengths of each adult and child and apply these strengths to goal setting and group learning activities.



The **FILM program in Oklahoma City, OK**, attributes its successful component integration to its single-site operation. Sharing one facility enables staff members to bring parents and children together for activities and to exchange information about plans, activities, and learning strategies. Three hours are set aside every week for team planning. The holistic approach used throughout the program ensures that the learning plans support family strengths and provide relevant knowledge and skills.

Parents in the **Oklahoma project** who have successfully demonstrated the necessary abilities in playgroup and home visits can become 'training aides' in the early childhood classrooms. This integration sends a powerful message to current participants.

Community Involvement: Meeting the Needs

Learning to work with other agencies in the community is crucial to the success of a family literacy effort. A comprehensive program needs a strong partnership of service providers to share the responsibility for meeting the needs of families. The level of involvement will vary, from a collaboration which includes financial investment to referral for services not provided by the program. Partners might be a school district that pays the salary of a preschool teacher on a family literacy team, or a day care facility that provides sibling child care for parents who are receiving government funding for this purpose. Many partnerships reciprocate services. For example, family literacy programs refer students to social services for counseling, and social services refer qualifying families to the family program. Ongoing communication between community partners prevents duplication of services.

Even Start funding requires a collaboration of
at least one local educational agency
and
one or more nonprofit community-based organizations
of demonstrated quality.

Developing successful partnerships takes time.
Collaborating partners have a role in identifying outcomes
for local evaluation and an interest in evaluation results.

Common areas of partnership:

- Education
- Recruitment and retention
- Health and social services
- Counseling
- Job training and/or job placement

Agencies frequently involved in family programs:

- Public school systems
- Adult education programs
- Housing authorities
- Homeless shelters
- WIC programs
- JOBS and JTPA (Social Services)
- Libraries
- Head Start
- Volunteer literacy programs
- Universities
- Churches
- United Way

Meeting the Needs:

Advisory Boards

Family programs that include community business leaders, area educators, and other social agencies on their advisory boards will benefit from more versatile leadership, increased involvement in the project, and access to existing resources. In the **Eau Claire, WI, program**, for example, the Family Literacy Advisory Committee consists of representatives from all participating partners: the literacy provider, the county human services department, the public school system, the YMCA, the area technical college, and the public library. This committee makes its recommendations to the LVA Board of Directors, which is the governing body.

Facilities

In the **Manhattan/Ogden, KS**, home-based program, center-based services (such as parent education support groups) are coordinated with existing agencies and take place in Chapter I schools, neighborhood centers, and adult and early childhood educational facilities throughout a two-county region.

The **Family Literacy Program** in **Eau Claire, WI**, uses multiple sites to meet the needs. Classrooms are either donated by the collaborating agencies or provided for a low rental fee. Administration of the program is conducted from the literacy office in the public library.



Transportation

Transportation to the program is a crucial factor in retention of families. In all four selected programs, this service is provided primarily through agreements with the public school districts or funded by Even Start.

"Without a car, there is no way I could get myself and my son to school every day. It makes me get up and get going when I know that bus will stop for me, no matter what the weather is doing."

WI Even Start parent

Meeting the Needs:

Teachers

Since the **Family Literacy Program** in Eau Claire, WI, is under the direction of a volunteer literacy provider, certified teachers are secured from outside sources. The public school system supplies teachers for the preschool program, and the area technical college supplies ABE instructors for the adult education component. The Even Start grant pays for other professional staff.



In **Webster Groves Even Start (MO)**, ABE instructors are provided by a collaborating agency, while the preschool teachers are paid through Even Start.

Even Start pays the salaries of teachers in the **Oklahoma City, OK, family program** and funds the training and pay for home visitors in the project at **Manhattan/Ogden, KS**.



Meals

Most programs that serve breakfast and/or lunch to the children fund this service through federal programs for reduced-price school lunch. In many cases these meals are prepared at schools in the community. The **Webster Groves Even Start (MO)** provides breakfast daily for staff and participants. It also offers special theme lunches at least once a month, serving favorites like pizza or celebrating a chosen book. Every month there is a "birthday lunch" with cake and a small celebration.

The **Oklahoma City, OK, program** also offers a daily interactive breakfast for staff, parents, and children. This service is funded by the volunteer organization of a major telephone company. Sharing meals together promotes the sense of extended family while meeting nutritional needs.

Meeting the Needs:

Child Care

Free child care is a major factor when recruiting parents who have young children at home.

As mentioned in the discussion of essential components, the family literacy programs in **Oklahoma City, OK**, and the **Webster Groves School District (MO)**, meet child-care needs on site by providing developmentally appropriate classes for the younger siblings as well as the preschoolers. Even Start funds this service.



Child care for the siblings of preschool students is provided through an arrangement with the YMCA in the **Eau Claire, WI, program**. Funding for this service is through the JOBS program (for eligible participants) and through the Even Start grant.

Manhattan/Ogden, KS, Even Start funds child care whenever it is needed for parent participation. Supervision of the children is provided, for example, while parents are attending Reading Workshops. It is also available at the family resource rooms in participating elementary schools if arrangements are made in advance. This enables parents to use computers or volunteer in the school.

Meeting the Needs:

Public Relations

Community support can be generated and maintained through effective coverage by the local media. Area businesses frequently donate supplies and/or services to facilitate communication with the public and within the program.

Family literacy in **Eau Claire, WI**, has gained public support and acceptance through extensive coverage by the local newspaper and television station. Every week someone from LVA-Chippewa Valley is featured as one of the Stars in Literacy, with a photo in the paper and a short statement on a television spot. The person might be a student, a tutor, a member of the LVA Board of Directors, or a community partner. Both forms of the ad are provided as a community service. This recurrent exposure helps the program maintain a high profile.

The **Oklahoma City, OK**, program maintains a link with the community through its newsletter, occasional coverage in the local newspaper, and articles in Even Start publications. Since publicity is a time-consuming task, all members of the busy, but limited, staff share the responsibility for networking.



The **Webster Groves Even Start (MO)** provides a monthly newsletter to keep families informed of special events at the Family Learning Center and in the community. Area businesses often donate flyers for publicity and tickets for fund-raising efforts. The local media feature program events and special family evenings several times a year, such as celebrating National Family Literacy Day with *The Cat in the Hat* (Dr. Seuss: Random House, 1957), seen in the above photo.

The **Manhattan/Ogden Even Start** disseminates information and networks with other service providers primarily through participation in the councils of social service agencies in its two counties and in the district leadership council of the local school district.

Meeting the Needs:

Recruitment

Effective recruitment requires high visibility, material in the languages of the population, a pro-active approach, multiple methods, and varied sources. Prospective adult students often need to be contacted personally to overcome their reluctance to enroll. Community agencies get involved by distributing flyers, referring clients to the program, and providing the forum for an introductory presentation or question-and-answer session.

In a program where the waiting list often includes a hundred families, recruitment takes care of itself. The **family program in Oklahoma City, OK**, has a strong network already established with Special Education personnel in the public schools, social services case workers, and area churches. Word of mouth keeps new families coming, as well.

The **Family Literacy Program in Eau Claire, WI**, makes its annual presentation at introductory meetings for Head Start. Interested parents are contacted by mail, by phone, and in person. Most referrals come through the county social services agency, the schools, the literacy office, and from other students.



The **Webster Groves Even Start Family Learning Center (MO)** hosts an Open House twice yearly to acquaint new participants with the facility. Parents and children assist recruitment by distributing program flyers door-to-door. Rewards are given to families recruiting three or more new families.

The **Manhattan/Ogden, KS**, recruitment efforts focus on opportunities for parents to help their children. Using an approach based on existing family strengths, Even Start promises support as parents prepare themselves and their children for school. Free RIF books are offered as an incentive to attend the monthly reading workshops.

Meeting the Needs:

Retention

The goal in the retention of families is to keep them in the program long enough to achieve learning gains and improvement in parenting. Successful programs offer the following suggestions to promote consistent attendance:

- Encourage full participation in all components.
- Provide orientation to define your expectations and help families set their goals.
- Respect the families: build on their strengths, recognize traditions, address critical needs, show personal interest.
- Maintain contact with the families.
- Provide appropriate resources/make necessary referrals.
- Provide flexible and convenient scheduling.
- Offer some activities for the whole family.
- Maintain a staff that reflects the ethnic diversity and language background of the families.
- Support self-esteem of participants and staff.
- Celebrate successes.

In order to meet these retention needs, programs need community support. Financial assistance is important, of course, but positive publicity also helps students and staff feel proud to be part of a successful endeavor.



The **family literacy program** in **Oklahoma City, OK**, aids retention by building the self-esteem of its multi-cultural population. By integrating bilingual resources throughout the learning environment, the staff demonstrates its appreciation of native language and tradition. The Early Learning Center sustains and promotes native language fluency as well as second language acquisition. Whole families can be involved in the program through evening ESL parenting classes offered to fathers and other members of the extended family. The multi-racial balance of staff members also reflects program sensitivity to cultural diversity.

The Family Learning Center operated by Webster Groves Even Start (MO) draws upon community volunteers to create a mentoring program for parents. This program provides parents with a 'buddy' who is willing to listen and offer encouragement. The association with former Even Start participants who have successfully completed the program or other interested volunteers motivates parents to stay with the program.

Parents who experience satisfaction from their involvement in the program are more likely to continue coming. The Webster Groves School District plans monthly activities for the whole family, such as the book-signing party shown below. Consistent attendance and goal achievement are rewarded through distribution of goods and services contributed by area businesses.



Through its partnership with the YMCA in Eau Claire, WI, the LVA Family Literacy Program is able to offer swimming lessons for preschoolers during class time and family memberships for healthy activities outside of class time.

Community collaborations are a key factor in the retention of participants of the Manhattan/Ogden, KS, Even Start. Maintaining a well-organized outreach effort helps the program meet the multiple and varied needs of families, while needs of individual families are addressed in the supportive one-to-one relationships established during home visits.

Meeting the Needs:

Celebrating Success

The **Webster Groves Even Start (MO)** makes success a community event. Businesses contribute items to reward performance and are often involved in the Family Learning Center's family evenings, held monthly to encourage healthy family interactions.

In the **Family Literacy Program in Eau Claire, WI**, staff members celebrate all the successes they can: passing a GED test, a month of good attendance, the attainment of a driver's license, and so forth. Each small step is recognized and acknowledged. One specific recognition is the annual publication of students' writings, a self-published book entitled *Celebrate Writing*. Every student who contributes to this collection receives a free copy at an end-of-the-year ceremony, hosted by the staff and referred to as the Celebration of the Stars.

The **family program in Oklahoma City, OK**, also regards the celebration of success as an everyday event, an intrinsic part of every lesson and every activity. The staff strives for continuous reinforcement of participants' efforts—assigning a new task, for example, at which the student is likely to be successful, in spite of his or her reluctance. Accomplishments large and small might be acknowledged by a pat on the back, words of praise, or a specially-made button announcing the feat. Most of the planned evening events for families are celebratory in nature, treating family time together as something to be celebrated. One very special event is the annual Mother's Day Luncheon. For many of these mothers, recognition of this day is something new. Mothers are honored with a catered meal in an elegant setting, complete with flowers and china, and served by 'uniformed' staff members.



The **Manhattan/Ogden, KS, Even Start program** celebrates achievements in the program as opportunities to move on to new levels of independence. Parents are awarded certificates for having met their goals and are encouraged to continue on the path of lifelong learning.

Community collaborations assure support for students as they move on to employment or continued education.

Meeting the Needs:

Volunteers

Volunteer tutors are available within many programs to assist adults one-to-one in acquiring the basic skills they need. Tutors may work with students right in the adult classroom or they may meet outside of class.

In the **Webster Groves School District (MO)**, the tutors are supplied by a local university program, the Literacy Center, and the community at large.

In **Oklahoma City, OK**, the volunteer tutors come primarily from a loosely-structured group of retired school teachers.

In **Eau Claire, WI**, the tutors are trained and supported through Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA), sponsor of the family literacy program. Trained volunteers also assist in the preschool program, the RIF projects, the family literacy library, publicity, and fund raising.

The **Manhattan/Ogden, KS, program** coordinates with civic volunteer groups, such as the local military wives' organization, to provide outreach services one-to-one. Home visitors are trained LVA tutors.



Counseling/Support Services

All of the featured programs offer parental support through conferences with the parenting facilitator and guided interaction with the peer group. When the situation warrants professional help, parents are referred to community agencies for additional counseling services.

LVA-CV in Eau Claire, WI, offers the services of a part-time social worker on staff. This takes crisis intervention out of the classroom and into a more private setting.

In the **Webster Groves Even Start (MO)**, support services provided by collaborating agencies are often brought directly to the Family Learning Center, creating a sense of 'home away from home.' These opportunities include such services as employment counseling and job referrals, legal services, various support groups, and daily phone contact. Pre-kindergarten screenings and special assessments are conducted on-site as well.

Meeting the Needs:

Technology Partnerships

All of the featured family programs provide access to computer training. The **Manhattan/Ogden, KS, Even Start project** offers instruction through a variety of community partnerships. An arrangement with library media centers in Chapter 1 schools opens computer labs to families. A grant secured in cooperation with the area technical center provides computer classes for Even Start parents in the summer. This fund provides scholarships for the classes and aids transition into job readiness classes. Collaboration with the state university allows access to computer hardware and software, including laptop computers for home use.



Books and Materials

Public and school libraries are excellent sources of books and materials. Many family programs provide library cards for participants and also make use of the free books available to families through Reading Is Fundamental (RIF), a federal program. The **Eau Claire, WI, program** hosts three RIF programs yearly where families receive free books as well as two fun-filled hours of activities and snacks.

Manhattan/Ogden Even Start distributes RIF books during home visits. These books are central to the program's literature-based curriculum.

The **Family Learning Center of the Webster Groves Even Start (MO)** offers a lending library well supplied with donated toys, books, and videos. Sometimes classes in the public schools 'adopt' the program and buy books for the children.



Meeting the Needs:

Transitions

Family literacy programs provide the opportunity for families to determine a direction, gain the necessary skills, and achieve their goals. Since this goal-setting spans all four components, there are many different changes taking place within families. For example, family members make transitions into Even Start, from home to school, from school to employment, and from school to other services.

Early childhood education components in family literacy generally incorporate some form of kindergarten readiness and health screening into the offerings. In many programs these assessments are conducted by public school personnel at the family literacy site.

Collaboration with other community services enables family programs to ease these transitions.

The **Oklahoma City, OK, Even Start program** introduces parents to the process of parent-teacher conferences while children are in preschool. This helps them feel more comfortable in the conference setting when their children progress to kindergarten. Parents are also encouraged to attend open house functions at their children's elementary schools and may even be recognized for this effort with the presentation of a pin reading, "I attended Open House."



Transition to work is sometimes accelerated by state laws. The 1996 welfare-to-work system in Wisconsin creates a four-tier progression to self-sufficiency for all welfare recipients. In order to accommodate the requirements of this system, called "W-2—Wisconsin Works," the **Family Literacy Program in Eau Claire, WI**, is adapting its curriculum to integrate work experience into the adult class schedule. In some situations, partnership with local businesses will allow training and employment on a trial basis, with the opportunity for full employment if job performance is satisfactory. Other efforts are being made to conduct literacy classes at the work site, particularly with ESL populations. If participants demonstrate a consistent commitment to work, W-2 will pay for the child care necessary to attend education and training activities.



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The transition from Even Start to employment is made easier for parents in the **Manhattan/Ogden, KS, program** by referring them to job placement agencies and by awarding scholarships to continuing education in computer skills and other business skills. In the early childhood component, close cooperation with the local schools ensures that program goals contribute directly to the mission of the school district.

Many programs schedule field trips for parents to continuing education facilities. In **Eau Claire, WI**, parents spend a full day at the technical college in order to get a feel for 'college life.' They take a tour, eat lunch together, listen to speakers, and then have free time to explore areas not included in the tour. Mothers in family literacy may also expand their awareness through a local organization called Women in Transition. This group meets on Saturdays and offers women advice on career choices, child-care services, wardrobe planning, and other issues relevant to a return to school or work.

Webster Groves Even Start (MO) utilizes other community agencies, such as the Rock Hill Ministries and the Family Support Network, to provide counseling services and support groups for women in transition. The staff assists families who drop out due to 'homelessness' by continuing home visits at the shelter and referring these families to the appropriate agencies. When needed, transportation services can be extended temporarily to include the homeless shelter.

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Meeting the Needs:

English as a Second Language

The challenge of teaching basic skills when English is not the primary language spoken in the home is one that draws upon the creativity and resourcefulness of a family literacy program. The following guidelines have proven useful in ESL family literacy programs:

- Build upon family strengths.
- Collaborate with ethnic community leaders and adult members.
- Cooperate with other agencies that work with this language group.
- Appreciate traditional cultures.
- Incorporate staff and volunteers from the native language community.
- Make education relevant to the lives of the participants.

"The strength of a culturally responsive educational program lies in its ability to respect and embrace diversity. A holistic approach that celebrates differences builds self-esteem in its participants as it develops applicable skills."

OK Even Start director



In 1995 LVA-CV in Eau Claire, WI, joined with an existing program to provide a continuum of services for ESL families in the community. This program is designed to help Asian immigrant families learn beginning levels of English and adapt to American culture. Individual help is provided by University students with tutor training. As their skills develop, the parents in this program may progress to other options, such as one-to-one tutoring through LVA, citizenship classes, support groups for mothers, Adult Basic Education, or the LVA-CV family literacy program. These families also participate in RIF activities offered by LVA-CV.

Meeting the Needs:

Funding

Most larger family literacy programs need some federal funding to get established. The necessity of community partners becomes obvious, however, as programs seek ways to expand services and to survive after their grants expire. Even in the earliest stages, non-monetary contributions, such as the facilities of a public library or classroom space donated by a school, may be the lifeline to a program.

The information below lists the major sources of current funding for the four exemplary programs discussed in this catalog.

LVA-Chippewa Valley Family Literacy Program Eau Claire, WI

Even Start
Chippewa Valley Technical College
Eau Claire Area Public Schools
Eau Claire County Human Services (JOBS)
YMCA
United Way
L. E. Phillips Memorial Public Library
Private donations

Manhattan/Ogden, KS, Even Start Project Manhattan/Ogden, Junction City/Fort Riley, KS

Even Start
Public schools in four-county area named above
Kansas State University
Adult Basic Education
Manhattan Area Technical Center
Head Start
Flint Hills Job Corps
Coalition of Parent Educators

Webster Groves Even Start Rock Hill, MO

Even Start
Webster University
St. Louis Public Schools
Job Training Partnership Act
Head Start
Webster-Rock Hill Ministries
Family Support Network
St. Louis Community College
St. Louis County Health Department
Parents As Teachers

Family Intergenerational Literacy Model Oklahoma City, OK

Even Start
Oklahoma City Public Schools
Oklahoma City University
Southwestern Bell Pioneers

Special Features of the Programs

The programs presented in this catalog are impressive because of the overall strength of their offerings. In addition, they have made contributions to the family literacy frontier in specialized areas, such as focusing on specific needs or taking an unusual approach to education or the dissemination of information. The following sections describe in more detail some of the undertakings which distinguish these programs from others.

The Webster Groves Even Start program in Rock Hill, MO, offers a wide variety of events for families. In 1995 they hosted children's author Donald Crews, in conjunction with the PEN Reading Program. Mr. Crews is shown here, signing a copy of his book, *Big Mama's* (Greenwillow Books, 1991).



Eau Claire, WI, Program Publishes Materials

The family literacy program in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, is administered by the local affiliate of Literacy Volunteers of America. This easy access to fully trained and supported volunteers enhances all components. Community volunteers tutor one-to-one in the adult classrooms, assist in the preschool classrooms, work in the resource library, plan and conduct interaction activities for parents and children, and so forth.

In 1994 LVA-Chippewa Valley created its own publishing company, Chippewa Valley Publishing, to meet the growing demand for information about its successful family program. The following publications are currently available: (See page 46.)

The Path to Family Literacy — a manual to aid the development and/or expansion of intergenerational literacy programs

Telling Tales — a detailed outline of a writing and illustrating project for parents and their children

Put It in Print — a guide to writing and publishing with adult students

Celebrate Writing — a collection of stories, poems, and essays written by the adult students in the family literacy program and the one-to-one tutoring program (published annually)

Sample page from *Telling Tales* (1995)

Chapter Two

Implementing activities to support parent-child writing



Primary stages for action:

1. Prepare the parents for the experience.
2. Prepare the children.
3. Bring parents and children together.

If we want to make the cooperative writing experience meaningful and valuable, we must strengthen the literacy background of both parents and children. We do this through positive exposure to reading and writing. We also strive to help parents become better teachers of their own children. By combining realistic expectations with a few useful techniques, we equip parents to deal with this challenge more confidently.

We prepare the children for the experience by filling their world with books, letting them know that print has meaning and is important. We share the joy of reading by modeling our own enjoyment. We share the joy of writing by allowing them a sense of "authorship," whatever their level of development. We praise their attempts to read and write, even when they make mistakes.

Most importantly, we prepare parents and children for the story-writing project by encouraging them to participate in reading and writing activities together. We provide the guidance—and we provide the opportunities.

Manhattan/Ogden, KS, Even Start Focuses on Children's Literature

The **Even Start Project of Manhattan/Ogden, KS**, is a prime example of comprehensive, fully integrated community collaboration. The program carefully avoids duplication of services as it incorporates a wide range of educational, private, and business efforts within a two-county area.

The heart of this program is its home-centered approach. Home visits take place on a regular basis and are tailored to the individual family's needs and goals. The home visitor functions as a guide to community resources as well as a role model in parenting. Families are encouraged to participate in family reading workshops, parent resource centers, and school library programs.

Another unique feature of this project is its reliance on children's literature as the foundation for instruction. The basic components—adult education, early childhood education, parenting, and parent-child interaction—are interwoven into a curriculum relevant to the needs and lives of the family. The themed units used in workshops and home visits include topics such as reading to children, discipline, consumer economics and family math, stress management, good nutrition, using libraries, self-esteem, and computer literacy.

Sample curriculum: "Munch and Crunch"

Topics:	Food, nutrition, and cook books
Goals:	Develop sound nutritional habits Improve basic skills Promote positive discipline
Outcomes:	Complex thinkers Effective communicators Quality producers Collaborative workers
Benchmarks:	Understanding the importance of good nutrition and menu planning Improved communication when shopping and cooking
Criteria:	Recipe sharing Planning, shopping for, and cooking a well-balanced meal (cooperative effort) Practicing applicable skills: sequencing, budgeting, calculating, measuring (Discussing material from parenting curriculum)
Relevant children's literature:	<i>Bread, Bread, Bread</i> by Ann Morris <i>Bread and Jam for Francis</i> by Russell Hoban <i>Gregory the Terrible Eater</i> by M. Sharmat <i>Growing Vegetable Soup</i> by Lois Ehlert

Webster Groves Even Start Celebrates Success

Keeping families active in a program often requires special incentives. The **Webster Groves School District (MO) Even Start** solicits products or gift certificates from local businesses to reward consistent attendance. Families who participate in the weekly classes and activities get "Even Start Bucks" to spend on donated items. They also share in special field trips, which broaden the experiences of both parents and children.

The ultimate reward is the annual trip for participating parents called "Celebrating Success." Each year parents take an active role in choosing the destination, raising the funds to travel, and setting the criteria for participation. Eligibility generally reflects consistent attendance and the achievement of a selected short- or long-term goal. The process becomes a meaningful whole language experience as students map the course, calculate the distances, write letters to cities on the agenda, and pursue their personal goals for eligibility.

Past destinations have included St. Louis, MO, Memphis, TN, and Chicago, IL (the Oprah Winfrey Show).

The primary fund-raising effort for the trip is the annual fashion show, which the community supports in a number of ways. For example, retail stores donate clothing, printers contribute programs and tickets, the local media provide publicity, and other businesses contribute door prizes.

Quotes from students' trip journals:

"I am grateful that the staff encouraged me everyday to work on my goals. Otherwise I would not have had this opportunity. I don't get to do things like this often. In fact, I've only been out of town once. I plan on returning in the fall to continue working on my long-term goal, and I will definitely be going on the Celebrating Success Trip again."

"A great way to reduce stress! This trip gave me a much needed break away from the children. . . I didn't think anything so educational could be such fun."

"This was a dream come true! I've never traveled out of St. Louis before. I feel like Dorothy in 'The Wizard of Oz.' I'll always remember this trip. . . Even Start will always be special for making this all possible: getting my GED and going to Chicago!"

"I anticipated that the trip would be fun . . . it was even better. I enjoyed the company of staff and the friends I have met at Even Start. I enjoyed spending time with adults."

Oklahoma City Program Stresses Component Integration

The **Family Intergenerational Literacy Model (FILM)** in **Oklahoma City, OK**, attributes its success primarily to two factors: the single-site arrangement, which fosters full integration of its components and staff, and the "strengths" approach, which uses existing family strengths as its building blocks.

Integration of components and staff is facilitated by reserving a three-hour block of time each week for staff planning. Staff members from the children's program have time to communicate with teachers of the parents. Joint goals are set and reinforced.

Because this program serves a predominantly bilingual population, it faces an ongoing challenge of securing staff qualified in the native language. Part of the solution has been to build on its own existing strengths by using parents as "training aides" in the children's classrooms. The program currently employs five former students in this capacity. While these parents practice the skills they have learned, they also serve as valuable members of the teaching team. This application of meaningful and practical skills is a prime example of the holistic approach embraced by this program.

This year, for the first time, a former student has been hired full-time as a 'bilingual tech,' a staff member who participates fully in all aspects of the program.

The Oklahoma City, OK, family literacy program operates from an instructional model developed by Dr. Donna C. Richardson, the Project Evaluation Director. This design, **MODELS**, is applied in all components and incorporates the following instructional sequence:

Model
Observation
Discussion
Exploration
Life skill integration
Success celebration

In the adult education classes, for example, the adult instructor **Models** the initial strategies, such as preparation for a job interview, then leads the students into interactive learning as they **Observe**, **Discuss**, and **Explore** the new strategies with their peers. Students are encouraged to integrate the strategies for learning into everyday **Life** situations, with celebrations of **Success** occurring when these strategies are implemented (ie., job obtained).

FILM's major goal is to help parents and children apply these strategies to daily life for more effective problem-solving. All instruction is from a whole language philosophy: relevant to the learner's life situation and sensitive to unique learning styles.

Resources for Family Literacy

The following is a listing of resources referred to in this publication:

Chippewa Valley Publishing

Literacy Volunteers of America-Chippewa Valley
400 Eau Claire Street
Eau Claire, WI 54701
(715) 834-0222

Even Start Program

Compensatory Education Program
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-6132
(202) 401-1692

(Or contact your state department of education)

High Scope Educational Research Foundation

High Scope Press
600 North River Street
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Literacy Volunteers of America

5795 Widewaters Parkway
Syracuse, NY 13214
(315) 445-8000

National Center for Family Literacy

Waterfront Plaza/Suite 200
325 West Main Street
Louisville, KY 40202-4251
(502) 584-1133

National Diffusion Network

Contact your state NDN Facilitator
or call the NDN directly at (202) 219-2134
or call NDN's technical assistance contractor:
RMC Research (800) 258-0802

The Path to Family Literacy (1996)

Manual by Carol Gabler and Jan Goethel
Published by NCFL and Steck Vaughn
Austin, TX: Steck Vaughn

Reading Is Fundamental (RIF)

Programs Division
600 Maryland Avenue, SW/Suite 500
Washington, DC 20024
(202) 287-3220